

### **Reply Brief Noted**

#### **Answer to Reply Brief**

Applicant's submission of a paper submitting a corrected "Appeal Brief's Summary of Claimed Subject Matter", submitted on 4-2-2009, has been entered and approved by the Examiner.

The Reply Brief filed on 4-2-2009 has been noted and is not persuasive of patentability. The prior art as applied clearly teaches an assembly that can be assembled comprising plasma torch components, and the assembled into the plasma torch to ease assembly and facilitate changing of the torch components. Claim 1 for instance, as broadly presented, merely claims a tip, electrode and shield cup, "integrally connected", during assembly. This feature is taught by the prior art applied as old in the art. The claims are silent as to the meaning of integrally connected. To for an integral assembly of multiple torch components and subsequently assemble this integral assembly into a plasma torch, is old as advanced in the Examiner's Answer. The claims at appeal do not preclude this interpretation of the prior art applied.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Mark H. Paschall whose telephone number is 571 272-4784. The examiner can normally be reached on 7am - 3pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tu Hoang can be reached on 571-272-4780. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

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Art Unit 3742

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